

**Abstract 546**

**TITLE:** Health Planning for AIDS and Minorities in Small Metropolitan Areas in Rural States:  
A Case from Iowa

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**ISSUE:** Within the United States, AIDS is a disease that has traditionally been most prevalent in large metropolitan centers. However, the incidence of AIDS is now rising more rapidly among persons in small metropolitan areas in rural states throughout the nation, particularly among minorities. In order to develop longrange plans to meet the needs of these underserved minorities, one county health department in Iowa assessed the prevalence of AIDS among various racial groups in the community. Using existing dataas the first step in a strategic planning process, the agency determined that African Americans in the local area were disproportionately affected by the disease, with cumulative AIDS rates more than twoand-a-half times greater than that for whites. The county health department subsequently identified barriers to monitoring and reducing HIV transmission among minorities in the community, and then developed policy recommendations to address this issue. This article suggests that health departments in small metropolitan areas in rural states may face greater challenges than those in larger urban areas when conducting AIDS planning for atrisk minorities.

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